



California Regional Water Quality Control Board Central Valley Region

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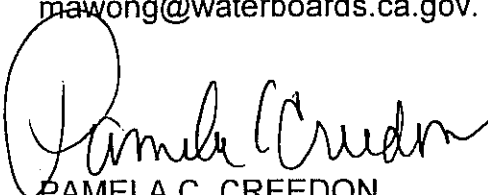
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SECOND QUARTER 2008 REPORTS FOR MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) PILOT PROGRAM

The 29 June 2005 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board), the State Water Resources Control Board, the California Department of Pesticide Regulation, and the Agricultural Commissioners of Glenn County and Butte County specifies activities that will take place in support of the Regional Water Board's Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. These support activities constitute the MOU Pilot Program.

On 29 June 2007, all parties renewed the MOU for four years. As required by the MOU, the staff liaisons from the Regional Water Board and the Agricultural Commissioners of Glenn County and Butte County submit Quarterly Reports of the activities performed under the contract and any recommendations to improve the MOU Pilot Program.

The 2008 Second Quarter Reports for the MOU Pilot Program activities are attached. If you have questions regarding this Report or the MOU Pilot Program, please contact me at (916) 464-4638 or you may contact Ms. Margaret Wong at (916) 464-4857, or by e-mail at mawong@waterboards.ca.gov.


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Enclosures

cc: Ms. Dorothy Rice, Executive Director, State Water Resources Control Board
Ms. Mary-Ann Warmerdam, Director, Department of Pesticide Regulation
Mr. Mark Rentz, Deputy Director, Department of Pesticide Regulation
Mr. Mark Black, Agricultural Commissioner, Glenn County
Mr. Richard Price, Agricultural Commissioner, Butte County
Mr. Johnny Gonzales, Program Manager, State Water Resources Control Board

California Environmental Protection Agency

ATTACHMENT A

MOU Pilot Program Central Valley Regional Water Board 2008 Second Quarter Report

Background

On 29 June 2005, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board), the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board), the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR), and the Agricultural Commissioners of Glenn County and Butte County that pertains solely to activities related to the Regional Water Board's Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP).

At the end of two years, the MOU was reviewed by the signatories and amended with minor revisions. The 2007 MOU is effective for four years, at which time the MOU will be reviewed by all parties to assess its effectiveness in addressing water quality impacts as described in the ILRP. Upon completion of the review, the MOU may be renewed, revised, or terminated.

The Agricultural Commissioners work under contracts with the Regional Water Board that specifies tasks to be performed. The activities for these tasks comprise the MOU Pilot Program. The current contracts between the Regional Water Board and each of the Agricultural Commissioners extend funding of 0.5 PY to each of the Agricultural Commissioners for the first two years of the MOU, with the provision that the contract may be extended for additional years if agreed to by all parties.

Under both the 2005 and 2007 MOUs, the Agricultural Commissioners and Regional Water Board appoint a staff liaison for this Pilot Program. Quarterly reports from the liaisons are required to update the status of the MOU Pilot Program. For this reporting period, the staff liaisons have summarized activities from March to June 2008. Attachment A contains the Regional Water Board staff's 2008 second quarter report. Attachments B and C contain the 2008 second quarter reports from the Butte County and Glenn County Agricultural Commissioners' staff, respectively.

Regional Water Board Staff Activities under the MOU Pilot Program

The Regional Water Board staff liaison met with the Agricultural Commissioners' staff in April and June to discuss the status of the MOU Pilot Program in achieving ILRP objectives.

Management Practices Reports for Pine Creek and Walker Creek were due 1 May 2008. Both reports are available to subwatersheds and the Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition Group. The survey of management practices in these reports may be

used as a template for other subwatersheds and the information obtained used to assess and evaluate management practices. By 1 December 2008, the evaluation of the management practices in Pine Creek and Walker Creek in achieving and maintaining water quality is due. Both reports will be posted on the Central Valley Regional Water Board website.

In May, the Regional Water Board staff met with Glenn County Agricultural Commissioner's staff to inspect rice fields and orchards for management practices and irrigation methods. Regional Water Board staff were informed of groundwater monitoring wells and parameters in Butte and Glenn Counties.

Program Support from Agricultural Commissioners and Their Staff

The Management Practices Reports use two different methods of surveying and documenting management practices in a subwatershed. Understanding how to obtain and use this information is necessary for Coalition Groups to address identified water quality problems.

The MOU Pilot Program is being integrated into the Coalition monitoring and outreach programs by providing support services and information. The Agricultural Commissioners have direct contact with growers and can provide information and updates on the ILRP.

The Agricultural Commissioners are providing input into the long-term program for the ILRP. Their knowledge of farming operations, pesticide usage, and other programs that affect agricultural activities will be invaluable in looking at long-term options and their effects.

Program Status

The staff liaisons are continuing their efforts on the ILRP objective of documenting management practices and their effectiveness in protecting water quality. Contracts with neighboring counties are being pursued as a means of extending management practice surveys into watersheds that cross county boundaries. By doing so, the Regional Water Board will gain more information and experience working with Agricultural Commissioners and their capabilities.

At the request of the Butte and Glenn Agricultural Commissioners, Regional Water Board staff is exploring the possibility of transferring part of the contract funds from personnel time to materials and supplies. The transfer of funds will aid in outreach outside of Butte and Glenn Counties.

Regional Water Board staff will continue to work closely with the Agricultural Commissioners and their staff to further the goals of the MOU Pilot Program.

ATTACHMENT B
MOU Pilot Program
Butte County Department of Agriculture
2008 Second Quarter Report

As required by contract # 05-183-150-0, the Butte County Department of Agriculture (Butte County) is to provide the Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) with a quarterly report of activities as it relates to the scope of work for the Irrigated Lands Program (ILRP) contract.

Task 1) *Provide information/maps and perform pesticide application inspections and investigate sites and exceedances for the ILRP as authorized by the Regional Water Board.*

Butte County continues to update the GIS map data of the hydrological information. This sub-task is ongoing.

Butte County staff performed 1 ILRP agricultural “Management Practices/ Pesticide” evaluation inspections this quarter. This sub-task is ongoing.

Task 2) *Inspect, assess and document management practices used in agricultural operations to protect water quality.*

Pine Creek Watershed:

The section of the Pine Creek watershed that resides within Tehama County continues to be surveyed for existing management practices utilized by agricultural operations adjacent the creek. This data will be incorporated into the existing Pine Creek BMP Report as an up-date. This subtask is ongoing.

Honcut Creek Watershed:

Agricultural parcels along the creek are now being surveyed for existing management practices. This subtask is ongoing.

Task 3) *Assist the Regional Water Board in evaluating sample monitoring points for agricultural wastewater discharges and a list of pesticides used within Butte County.*

Honcut Creek Monitoring Site:

A new up-stream sample location for Honcut Creek in the BYS sub-watershed was evaluated for the RWQCB and SVWQC.

Butte County staff continues to update the pesticide list. This sub-task is ongoing.

Task 4) *Coordinate and conduct outreach to growers on management practices that protect water quality.*

Butte County staff attended the RWQCB / CEQA scoping stakeholder meeting April 8, 2008.

Butte County staff attended the Butte Resource Conservation District meeting June 17, 2008.

Handouts and brochures that explain the Ag Waiver and ILRP pilot program, Coalition efforts and activities within sub-watersheds, continue to be provided at pesticide permit appointments.

Task 5) *Assist Regional Water Board staff by coordinating with other agencies and providing information and input that will further the implementation of the ILRP.*

Butte County staff has attended and participated in the following organized ILRP related function and meetings this quarter:

- 3 ILRP/ SWRCB meetings
- 2 watershed and SVWQC meetings
- 3 RDC and NRCS meetings
- 1 other ILRP affiliated meeting
- 1 grower ILRP out-reach function

Recommendations: None

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ATTACHMENT C

MOU Pilot Program Glenn County Department of Agriculture 2008 Second Quarter Report

In accordance to contract # 07-078-150, the Glenn County Department of Agriculture (Glenn County) is to provide the Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) with a quarterly report of activities as it relates to the scope of work for the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP) contract. Following is a list of the tasks:

Task 1. Provide information/maps and inspect and investigate sites for the ILRP as authorized by the Regional Water Board.

- A. Provide Information on watershed activities (pesticide application, construction restoration, etc.), on watershed characteristics (crop types, drainages, etc.), and an updated map of agricultural drainages (as changes are made) within the sub-watershed to assist the Regional Water Board in identifying releases to waters of the State releases into waters of the state.*

Scheduled completion: Ongoing during term of agreement.

There has been no additional request for information this quarter for this task.

- B. As authorized by the Regional Water Board Contract Manager, perform a minimum of three pesticide pre- application inspections per year (in addition to inspections conducted for DPR) based on water quality issues identified by Regional Water Board, Coalition Groups/Individual Dischargers, or the Commissioner. Inspection reports are due 30 days from inspection.*

Scheduled completion: Pre-application inspections to be completed by 1 July of each year.

Glenn County staff has not performed any additional inspections this quarter. Applications of the types of materials that are detrimental to water quality have been difficult to intercept and staff has been overwhelmed with propanil applications for rice. It is anticipated that during the month of July, there will be more opportunities to do this type of inspection and the outreach that goes along with them.

- C. Provide a list of agricultural pesticides being used in the County and inform the Regional Water Board when new chemicals/pesticides are used. Inform the Regional Water Board of trends or changes in pesticide use due to resistance or change in registration.*

Scheduled completion: Ongoing during term of agreement.

Based upon our inquiries, there are no new materials being used in Glenn County.

- D. *As authorized by the Regional Water Board Contract Manager, perform investigations to identify sources of water quality exceedances. Investigations may include sampling for water quality, site inspection, or inspection of records or documents.*

Scheduled completion: Ongoing during term of agreement.

Inspection/investigation reports due within 60 days of site visit.

There has been no request to perform an investigation for the Regional Water Board this quarter.

Task 2. Inspect, assess and document management practices used in agricultural operations to protect water quality.

- A. *Identify, evaluate and document management practices that are specific and appropriate to activities and operations at Walker Creek Subwatershed. Documentation shall be in the form of a report and/or presentation.*

Schedule completion: Report on management practices for Walker Creek Subwatershed by 1 May 2008. Evaluate effectiveness of management practices to protect water quality at Walker Creek by 1 December 2008.

Glenn County staff has completed the large-scale watershed evaluation within the Walker Creek watershed and has provided the final report along with Arc View shape files and Access data base information. The next deliverable for the project is ongoing and will be completed by the December 1, 2008 due date.

- B. *Work with subwatersheds on documenting baseline management practices and the means of determining effectiveness of implemented practices in improving water quality. Task may include working with other agencies, growers or stakeholders to develop and implement the management practices, or by giving presentations on how to develop and implement such programs.*

Scheduled completion: Ongoing during term of agreement.

Task 3. Assist the Regional Water Board in evaluating sample monitoring points for agricultural wastewater discharges within the Sacramento Valley. Assist in water quality exceedances at monitoring sites.

- A. *Inspect sampling points designated in the Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition or the California Rice Commission Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP) Plans within the County to determine if representative*

samples of agricultural wastewater discharges can be obtained at the designated sample points and at specified sampling times.

Schedule completion: Ongoing during term of agreement due to additional or new sample sites.

Glenn County staff continues to coordinate with the local sub-watersheds in their evaluations of current and potential sampling locations. County staff has recently assisted the local sub-watershed and Coalition managers with the selection of monitoring sites for the 2009 season.

- B. Work with Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition or subwatershed on follow-up actions when monitoring indicates water quality problems. Assist in the identification and assessment of management practices that may mitigate the water quality problem. Document the effectiveness of the implemented practices.*

Scheduled completion: Ongoing during term of agreement.

Task 4: Conduct and/or coordinate public education and outreach programs on the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program, coordinate and conduct outreach to growers and stakeholders on management practices that protect water quality, and document and evaluate management practices within a subwatershed.

- A. Participate in outreach programs to inform and assist growers in complying with Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program requirements.*

Scheduled completion: Ongoing during term of agreement.

Glenn County staff, at the request of the Colusa Glenn Sub-watershed, has performed pesticide use queries to provide a list of historical chlorpyrifos users within the county. In addition, a list of pesticide dealers, pest control advisors, and pest control operators was also created. With this information, the Sub-watershed prepared an outreach letter reminding them of the BMPs that should be incorporated while mixing and loading and applying that material.

In May, County staff assisted the Sub-watershed with information necessary to address exceedances of the diazinon TMDL in the Colusa Drain.

- B. Provide outreach to growers and stakeholders on management practices and their effectiveness in protecting water quality.*

Scheduled completion: Ongoing during term of agreement.

See Task 4: A above

- C. *Evaluate outreach efforts and help Regional Water Board staff design outreach programs on management practices to protect water quality.*

Scheduled completion: Ongoing during term of agreement.

Glenn County staff continues to provide outreach when requested and also by attending meetings of the SVWQC, local sub-watersheds, ILRP long term planning meetings, local Resource Conservation Districts (RCD), Farm Bureau, California Rice Commission, Department of Pesticide Regulation, Butte County Agricultural Commissioner's Department and Sacramento Valley Agricultural Commissioners Association to promote programs that may be beneficial to water quality. It is recommended that outreach to growers will continue to be the most important component for the ILRP in the future. Recent discussions of including groundwater in this regulatory program will create the need for additional outreach on a more complex level outside of the agricultural arena. The current level of understanding of the existing program and enforcement issues has taken years; an expansion into groundwater will necessitate broader outreach efforts.

Task 5: Work with stakeholders, including other agencies, on development and implementation of management practices.

- A. *Coordinate with other agencies associated with agricultural operations or environmental protection on management practices that protect water quality.*

Scheduled completion: Ongoing during term of agreement.

- B. *Facilitate interactions for collaboration with stakeholders to ensure management practices are identified and implemented to ensure water quality. Work may include Identification and prioritization of water quality problems caused by discharges to irrigated lands.*

Scheduled completion: Ongoing during term of agreement.

There has been no additional work in this task this quarter.

- C. *Other activities agreed upon by both parties that fall under the purview of the MOU and this contract.*

Scheduled completion: Ongoing during term of agreement.

Glenn County staff continues to see watershed evaluations for BMPs as an effective way to gather information that will assist the Regional Water Board and local sub-watersheds in collaborative outreach efforts. As discussed in previous reports, the evaluation in the Logan Creek watershed is still underway. A database similar to the Walker Creek watershed evaluation

has been created, field surveys are being conducted, and grower survey information is being collected.

Glenn County staff was also asked by the Regional Water Board to assist in a complaint in the Walker Creek area relating to irrigation runoff. Staff performed a query to determine who had control of the property and requested recent pesticide application information. A field survey had been completed for the site and was evaluated. Staff, in coordination with the Sub-watershed, accompanied Regional Water Board staff to the site where the complaint was made for evaluation of the land.

Recommendations: Efforts are currently underway to assist the Regional Water Board with the long-term goals of the ILRP through various public meetings and input requests. The role of Agricultural Commissioners in this program may need to be expanded to a broader geographical area within the Regional Water Boards jurisdiction in an attempt to bring a better understanding of local crops and conditions into the hands of Regional Water Board staff.